



Department of Justice

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INDIANAPOLIS VIOLENT CRIME INITIATIVE PRODUCES 15 YEAR SENTENCE FOR ILLEGALLY-ARMED FELON

U.S. Attorney Joe Hogsett says case is part of ongoing effort to clean up Indianapolis streets

PRESS RELEASE

INDIANAPOLIS – United States Attorney Joseph H. Hogsett announced that George Burdine, age 58, of Indianapolis, was sentenced this morning to 15 years in federal prison by U.S. District Judge Tanya Walton Pratt. Burdine had entered a plea of guilty to charges that he illegally-possessed a handgun as a previously convicted felon. Burdine's extensive criminal history involved more than thirty prior arrests, and his conviction comes as part of the U.S. Attorney's ongoing Violent Crime Initiative.

"For five decades, this defendant used our local jails and prisons as his own personal revolving door," Hogsett said. "This is exactly the kind of conduct our Violent Crime Initiative is designed to combat, and today's sentencing guarantees that this habitual offender won't trouble our streets again for a long time."

On September 18, 2011, Burdine was stopped for a traffic violation by a police officer with the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department. After Burdine stepped out of the vehicle, the officer noticed what appeared to be a knife sticking out of Burdine's left rear pants pocket. After the officer secured the knife, Burdine was questioned as to whether he was in possession of any other weapons. Burdine admitted that there was a gun in the vehicle, and a loaded .38 caliber Charter Arms revolver was recovered from Burdine's vehicle.

Burdine's forty year criminal history in and around Marion County includes 32 prior arrests, and 10 prior felony convictions. These previous cases involved convictions for theft, burglary, cocaine possession and driving while his license was suspended.

In sentencing Burdine, Judge Pratt identified him as an armed career criminal (ACC), a designation that carries with it a mandatory minimum of 15 years in federal prison. The ACC

category is a federal-specific prosecutorial tool, and Hogsett said the sentencing enhancement was a key component of the office's efforts to assist local law enforcement combat violent crime.

This prosecution comes as part of the U.S. Attorney's Violent Crime Initiative (VCI), and is the result of collaborative investigative efforts by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, as well as the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department.

Launched in March 2011, the VCI has produced a dramatic increase in the number of gun-related charges brought federally. In the year preceding the initiative, there were just 14 defendants charged with federal gun crimes by the U.S. Attorney's Office. In the nearly two years since, more than 200 defendants have been charged.

According to First Assistant U.S. Attorney Josh J. Minkler, who prosecuted the case for the government, Judge Walton Pratt also imposed 5 years supervised release following Burdine's release from prison.

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